

## V. FINDING

### 25.ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

**I select ALTERNATIVE A: PROPOSED ACTION involving the exchange of one isolated section of state trust land for two accessible sections of land owned by CB Ranch as described in Chapter 1, Section 1.4 on pages 8 & 10 of the CB Ranch/DNRC Land Exchange Environmental Assessment (EA) dated July 2007.**

This alternative best meets the Purposes of the exchange - to consolidate state trust land holdings, provide greater acreage and public and administrative access for management of state land and acquire valuable timberland in exchange for an isolated inaccessible section of state land on a steep slope with limited timber productivity (EA pg 5). This alternative is consistent with state law regarding land exchanges (77-2-201 through 77-2-217), is consistent with the DNRC Land Exchange Policy (revised December 2004), and meets/exceeds the 7 criteria adopted by the Montana Board of Land Commissioners for evaluation of land exchange proposals. Potential benefits of the PROPOSED ACTION are noted in Chapter 2 2.1.1 "The Best Interest of the Trust" which analyzes the exchange to the DNRC Land Exchange criteria (EA, pages 12 & 13).

The EA evaluated impacts of NO ACTION (Alternative B) and the PROPOSED ACTION (Alternative A), exchanging two sections of CB Ranch Land for one section of DNRC land, as well as an additional alternative (Alternative C), exchanging 1 and 1/2 sections of CB Ranch Land for 1 section of DNRC land. The analysis displays a reasonable range of alternatives from which to make my decision.

The NO ACTION alternative does not meet the stated purposes of the exchange outlined in Chapter 1, Section 1.3 (page 7 of the EA). The benefits associated with state land consolidation, improved public and administrative access to state land, and increased revenue production for the school trust would not be realized. A description of NO ACTION is contained in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2 (EA, page 14). The PROPOSED ACTION ALTERNATIVE C (exchanging 1 and 1/2 sections of CB Ranch Land for 1 section of DNRC land) meets the stated purposes but to a lesser extent than Alternative A. A detailed analysis of Alternative C is described on page 14 in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.

The economic analysis summary for forest land is displayed in Appendix D of the EA (page 49).

The comments expressed at the July 25, 2007 public hearing were all in support of the land exchange for the DNRC acquiring two accessible sections for an isolated parcel.

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## 26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

Montana Administrative Rule 36.2.524 outlines criteria for the determination of significance including;

1. Severity, duration, geographic extent and frequency of occurrence
2. Probability impacts will occur
3. Growth inducing or Growth inhibiting aspects
4. Quantity and quality of environmental resources affected
5. State and/or societal Importance of affected resources
6. Precedent setting implications
7. Potential conflicts with existing federal, state and local plans

This project went through an extensive public scoping process involving newspaper announcements in the Missoulian and Ravalli Republic, and mailings to interested individuals, organizations, agencies, politicians, adjacent landowners, and lessees. Responses from scoping were used to identify potential issues that might result from the proposal. In addition resource and technical specialists analyzed the proposal relative to their specific disciplines.

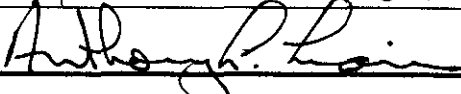
No substantive issues were raised during the scoping process, so the original proposal was not revised. Chapter 1, Section 1.6 (EA, page 16) summarizes the key issues identified in the scoping process.

Chapter 3 provides information regarding the existing condition of the resources within the CB Ranch-DNRC Land Exchange that may be affected by the implementation of the three alternatives. Based upon my review of this information I have concluded that **implementation of Alternative A: Proposed Action will not create significant environmental impacts.**

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## 27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

☐ EIS      ☐ More Detailed EA      ☒ No Further Analysis

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<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> 8/10/07